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COUGHLIN'S NAME CAREFULLY KEPT OUT OF BROOKLYN TRIAL

Seventeen Frontists Represented as Unconnected with Detroit Priest

Avoidance of any mention of Father Coughlin's name is the most striking feature of the trial, now taking place in Brooklyn, New York, of 17 Christian Frontists on charges of plotting to overthrow the United States Government. The result is that in reading about the case the public is fast getting the erroneous impression that the 17 defendants are a group aside and alone, in no way connected with their spiritual if not actual head, the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin of Social Justice and the Christian Front. To close observers of what is transpiring in the court-room, it appears as if the prosecution, too, has fallen in with this desire to keep Coughlin's name out of the story. A typical example is to be found in the testimony of Dennis A. Healy, star witness for the prosecution: discussing the reasons for certain men's joining the Christian Front, he said, "He joined after hearing a priest make a speech," yet no effort was made to find out who the "priest" was.

Split Within Defense

A wide split, hitherto unreported, took place within the ranks of the defense when Attorney Leo Healy decided to blame William Gerald Bishop for the entire plot, showing with the help of the other 16 defendants that Bishop was actually an agent-provocateur. This decision to get out at Bishop's expense did not at all appeal either to Bishop or his attorneys, who are now preparing to fight Leo Healy's plan with counter-charges of their own. The counter-charges are said to be of most serious nature.

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NEW TROUBLES FOR MOBILIZERS

Democrats Cancel Meeting for Joe -- His Own Men in Rebellion

The meeting which the Fourth Ward Democratic Club of Garfield, New Jersey, arranged for April 1 to hear Joseph E. McWilliams, head of the Christian Mobilizers (see The Hour for March 30), did not take place after all. The reason was that the Democrats themselves decided that, in view of the fascist character of the Mobilizers and the crim-

inal records of certain of McWilliams' followers, they would not care to have Handsome Joe as their guest speaker. The affair was called off five days before the date set for the meeting, whereupon the disappointed fascists of New York began to heap abuse upon Democrats for "showing the white feather."

New trouble developed within the Mobilizers' camp when anonymous circulars were mailed to members of the strongarm gang denouncing McWilliams and demanding an entirely new leadership. Joe and his faithful handful are much worried about this step, especially since they are completely at sea as to the identity of the trouble-maker within their ranks. They go around saying that his identity is "already suspected," thus trying to scare and smoke out the rebel or rebels, but so far these tactics have been of no avail.

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PELLEY DESERTED BY FORMER FOLLOWERS

Gives Lame Answer to Query on Money

Pelley's Liberation for March 21 prints a letter from one of its supporters in Massachusetts, in which the reader, Mrs. A. W. L. (full name is not given), takes the Silver Shirt fuehrer to task as follows: "The reports of the recent testimony which you gave at the Dies Investigation were very surprising to me, and must have been to others. ... It is a complete surprise that you have such a large source of income. Is this something recent? You have asked for funds to aid your work, and it is rather embarrassing for those who have stated your limited means to find that this is not so." Pelley's substitute editors print the letter in order to give an answer to it, but it is a lame answer indeed. They write about Pelley what Pelley tells them to write: "Never in his life has he stood more in need of financial and moral backing. But the great mass of those whom he has enlightened over the past seven years seem to be blissfully oblivious as to whether he is in the toils of Yiddish persecution or not." He says he has no money now, and blames the Dies Committee for it; "Pelley today is broke -- financially! -- and more than all else, a committee from his own Congress has been most capable in achieving it."

Does Not Blame Individual Members of Dies Committee

The fascist leader of Silver Shirts does not, however, blame all the members of the Dies Committee. In fact, according to Pelley, "Individual members of that committee practically apologize to Pelley in secret for their demeanor, giving it out: 'After all, you must remember that I have to play politics!'" Unfortunately, Pelley does not divulge the names of those particular members who spoke to him in such a friendly manner.

Pelley and his attorney, T. Edward O'Connell, have lost their battle of legalistic resistance to extradition to North Carolina and its jails. The action on a writ of habeas corpus was before Judge Jesse C. Adkins of the Federal District Court in Washington, D. C.

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CHICAGO FASCIST PREDICTS NAZI VICTORY

Newton Jenkins Eagerly Quoted by Bund

That "Hitler will win because he ought to win," and that the dictator's victory will come as a result of a settlement "around the conference table" rather than as a consequence of real fighting, such is the expressed conviction of the Chicago fascist and anti-Semite, Newton Jenkins. He issued a statement embodying these views, from his La Salle Street office, and the Bund's newspaper Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter hastened to print it in full in its issue for March 21. An ambiguous phrase in Jenkins' statement voices his conviction that "except for the Jews the German people and the German nation have solved their internal problems." Does the Chicago fascist feel that by mistreating the Jews the Hitlerites have failed to solve Germany's problems? Or -- what is more likely -- does he believe that the mistreatment of the Jews has not been far-reaching enough to solve the Reich's problems? (For our last report on Newton Jenkins' trips to Nazi Germany and other earlier activities see The Hour for November 11, 1939, page 5.)

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BUND MAY PUBLISH THORKELSON'S SPEECHES

In its issue for April 4 Deutscher Weckruf prints what is purported to be a reader's letter, signed "Portland," in praise of the fascist speeches made in Congress by Representative Jacob Thorkelson (Rep., Montana). The letter suggests that the Nazis reprint Thorkelson's speeches "in book or pamphlet form for the members and friends of your organization." In the past Thorkelson's speeches were publicized through the press of William Dudley Pelley, head of the Silver Shirts, but apparently, because of Pelley's recent financial embarrassment, the Bund is now preparing to take up where the goateed fascist of North Carolina left off.

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HITLER'S "VICTORY" IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

The Hour is informed that the past winter in Nazi Germany was marked by an unprecedented high rate of mortality in concentration camps. For those camps there was no coal at all, as the Gestapo officials decided that during the shortage of fuel suffered by the Reich the domestic enemies of Hitler were entitled to no consideration whatever. One night, at the height of the cold spell, all the prisoners in each barracks were moved to the center of the building and were told to sleep piled together en masse. When morning came, there were hundreds of prisoners found frozen dead, the average for each barracks being twenty bodies.

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WE ARE BEING NOTICED

Two More Fascists Visit or 'Phone The Hour

The Hour is receiving increasing attention from the several varieties of domestic fascists and would-be fuehrers.

There was the visit to our offices of George F. A. Boian, president of the Association of Rumanian Christians in the United States. Boian was reported in The Hour (October 21, 1939, page 2) as a zealous fascist orator, of extensive connections with certain fascist leaders in America. On his visit to our offices last week, Boian unwittingly confirmed that he had been summoned to Washington to explain some of his activities, although he denied being personally acquainted with the more publicly known fascist chiefs. On leaving he declared that The Hour would receive its answer in the form of "headlines in the newspapers on startling events abroad."

Another, who paid his grudging respects to our reporting of the anti-democratic groups in America, was Henry Curtiss, anti-Semitic editor of Curtiss' Weekly American Bulletin, and admirer of the Mobilizers' chief Joe McWilliams. Curtiss telephoned to request a copy of last week's Hour reporting on his fascist activities. He wanted the story for his clipping book, he said.

With these two incidents added to our previous score, The Hour's record is fairly complete, since Father Coughlin's Social Justice suggested that we be picketed (see our issue of November 11, 1939, page 3), and his Christian Front as well as McWilliams' Mobilizers and Colescott's Klan have on separate occasions objected to our steady work of uncovering their activities and real aims.

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COUGHLIN EXPOSED BY FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Kansas City Organization Publishes Unique Pamphlet

A highly valuable large-sized pamphlet of 26 pages, entitled Father Coughlin Self-Condemed, was issued recently by Friends of Democracy, Inc., of Kansas City and New York. (Rev. L. M. Birkhead, National Director). In a lucid, graphic and concise manner, through the use of numerous photostats of letters, articles and other expressions by Coughlin and his friends, the compilers of the pamphlet let the Radio Priest reveal himself, in the just words of Friends of Democracy, as "ally of anti-Catholic, Pope-baiting elements; hate-monger and anti-Semite; propagandist of Naziism; inspirer of treason and conspiracy, de-tractor of American democracy; purveyor of forgeries, fabrications and plagiarisms." The Hour congratulates the Rev. L. M. Birkhead and his associates on their fine achievement, and calls the attention of individuals and organizations to the Friends of Democracy and the timely pamphlet

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COUGHLIN'S ART OF ANSWERING CRITICS

The art of Jew-baiting demands a peculiar kind of finesse. Compared with the works of such European virtuosos as Hitler, Streicher and Goebbels, American anti-Semitism has been crude. Occasionally a diligent student of the Europeans will Jew-bait with style; but, on the whole, our native talents are inferior. We have yet to produce original masterpieces to equal the classical Protocols of Zion, Mein Kampf, etc. In this field of imaginative literature, as in others, a native tradition is only now being developed.

One step in this direction has recently been taken with the publication of a book at Royal Oak, Michigan. This book has some claim to be considered as the first American essay in Jew-baiting written with European finesse. Hundreds of thousands of copies have already been printed and are being distributed. Enthusiastic anti-Semites throughout the country are hailing it as a native masterpiece. The book exhibits a degree of skill and audacity which raises it far above the level of the usual crudities.

The title of the book is An Answer to the Critics of Father Coughlin. In spite of the fact that listeners to the Coughlin Sunday radio program are strongly urged to read it, Father Coughlin, we are assured, is not the author. He could not be the author because, of course, Father Coughlin is not an anti-Semite. As he himself nicely phrases it, "it is more a question of Semitism in the United States than of anti-Semitism" (sic!).

The book is written by "friends" of Father Coughlin. It sets out to answer Coughlin's "major critics." Who are Coughlin's major critics? They are Catholics, Protestants, trade unionists, liberals and progressives of every kind; even the United States Government may now be included among his "critics." But the book goes straight to its point. For its purposes only one critic is mentionable: the Jewish people. They are isolated as the opponents of Coughlinism. This is one of the genuine subtleties in the book. This isolation of the Jews is in itself a most effective piece of anti-Semitism, enabling the book to be entirely devoted to an attack on the Jews.

One does not know which to admire more -- the cleverness of this Jew-baiting, or the cleverness with which Father Coughlin at once endorses it and disassociates himself from it. Since it is written by anonymous "friends," Coughlin is not directly responsible for it. Since it is written in defense of Coughlin, his name is on the cover, and on every other page.

Coughlin is becoming quite adept at this technique. A trial is now proceeding in New York City. Seventeen members of the "Christian Front" are charged with conspiring to overthrow the government of the United States. The "Christian Front," like this anti-Semitic book, has been endorsed by Coughlin. The young men on trial have proclaimed their loyalty to the radio priest. Nevertheless, no mention of Coughlin has yet been made at the trial.

Isn't it about time some responsible agent asked Father Coughlin a few leading questions?

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